United Nations A/71/PV.81

General Assembly
Seventy-first session

Official Records

81st plenary meeting
Thursday, 11 May 2017, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Bande (Nigeria), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 115 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(a) Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/71/589/Add.2)

The Acting President: In paragraph 3 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint Mr. Olivier Myard of France as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for a term of office beginning on 11 May 2017 and ending on 31 December 2019.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint Mr. Olivier Myard as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for a term of office beginning on 11 May 2017 and ending on 31 December 2019?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 115.

(b) Appointment of members of the Committee on Contributions (A/71/590/Add.2)

The Acting President: In paragraph 3 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint Ms. Zhang Wei of China as a member of the Committee on Contributions, for a term of office beginning on 11 May 2017 and ending on 31 December 2017.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint Ms. Zhang Wei as a member of the Committee on Contributions for a term of office beginning on 11 May 2017 and ending on 31 December 2017?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 115.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

The Acting President: I now invite the attention of the Assembly to the report of the Fifth Committee submitted under sub-item (d) of agenda item 115, entitled "Appointment of members of the International Civil Service Commission", as contained in document A/71/592/Add.1.

In order for the Assembly to consider the report of the Fifth Committee, it will be necessary to reopen

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

17-13334 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

the Assembly's consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 115.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 115 and proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 115 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(d) Appointment of members of the International Civil Service Commission

Report of the Fifth Committee(A/71/592/Add.1)

The Acting President: In paragraph 3 of its report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly appoint Mr. Vladimir Storozhev of the Russian Federation as a member of the International Civil Service Commission, for a term of office beginning on 11 May 2017 and ending on 31 December 2020.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint Mr. Vladimir Storozhev as a member of the International Civil Service Commission, for a term of office beginning on 11 May 2017 and ending on 31 December 2020?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 115.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.

A/71/
PV.82

Readex
Fiche

United Nations A/71/PV.82

General Assembly

Official Records

Seventy-first session

82nd plenary meeting
Wednesday, 24 May 2017, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 125

Multilingualism

Report of the Secretary-General (A/71/757)

Draft resolution (A/71/L.68)

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Belarus to introduce draft resolution A/71/L.68.

Mr. Dapkiunas (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): It is not generally the custom for diplomats to ask one another awkward questions, but sometimes those questions linger even when they remain unspoken. Today I will therefore have to ask myself an awkward question.

Is this the time for the General Assembly to be discussing translation when dozens, hundreds, even thousands are still dying all over the world from war, hunger and disease? How appropriate is an agenda item on language and translation when the world is having very mixed success in its efforts to arrive at a sustainable global paradigm for security, equitable development and respect for human rights?

My answer is a short one. Yes, this is the time and it is appropriate. Why? The meaning and significance of draft resolution A/71/L.68, submitted to the Assembly today, is broader and deeper than a mere demonstration of respect for a well-known profession closely linked to diplomacy and international affairs. The draft resolution's foundation and timeliness are reflected in the symbolism of its subject and its importance to the work of the United Nations.

First, the draft resolution is not about institutions or entities. It is above all about people. It is about those unseen and still unsung heroes who labour on the linguistic front lines in the battle for transparency in communication, common sense and mutual understanding. Unfortunately, in our work this critically important focus on individual human beings frequently gives way to the temptation to limit ourselves to an institutional analysis of the issues we have to deal with.

Secondly, this is a draft resolution about the fragile, mysterious phenomenon that is the cornerstone of the national identities of every one of our United Nations and every one of our peoples and that helps us to understand who and what we are. It is about the insufficiently appreciated role of language in the life of human society.

Thirdly, like resolution 69/324, on multilingualism, it reflects our shared belief that each language is a synthesis of what is common and what is individual. It embodies the notion that the source of the strength of a united world lies in its diversity, and that to achieve unity we must work tirelessly to respect, preserve and maintain our world's cultural and linguistic diversity, which is a vital condition for strengthening the spirit of

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

17-14792 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

openness, fairness and dialogue in our intercourse with one another.

Fourthly, while the draft resolution is formally dedicated to representatives of the linguistic professions generally, in a sense it about all of us who gather here at the United Nations in the quest for a path to a safer, more sustainable and more just world. In its highest sense, translation is a craft and an art that helps to build bridges between civilizations, cultures and world views. In a world that has excelled at building walls and creating ever more new dividing lines, any wisdom or encouragement that teaches us how to do a better job of building bridges of friendship and understanding between us — spiritual as well as material bridges — can never be superfluous.

I am very grateful to the delegation of the friendly country of Azerbaijan for its invaluable support in realizing this initiative from the very beginning and to the sponsors and signatories of the draft resolution. It is not always easy to be among the first to support a new, unexplored topic, but it is always worthwhile. On behalf of the delegations that worked on the draft resolution, I am grateful to the leadership and our many colleagues in the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, whose advice and support made today's event possible.

On behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution, I bow down to the translators working in the quiet of their offices, far from this Hall, and the interpreters, sitting in their booths, now much more visible to the world, and all of the professional linguists who work to further the cause of peace, mutual understanding and development. I hope that the words spoken today in the General Assembly about professional translation and professional linguists will not be the last we hear on the subject. The delegation of Belarus believes that one topic particularly deserving of further discussion is that of legal protection for translators working in conflict zones and high-risk situations.

The draft resolution's most symbolic element is its declaration of 30 September as International Translation Day. So what if translators, professional and vocational, have been celebrating that day for the past 63 years? The fact that today the United Nations is putting its weight behind its words to dedicate the day is unquestionably a positive. It is never too late to do the right thing.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Friends of Spanish, comprised of more than 20 Spanish-speaking countries from three continents, including similar groups in Geneva and Vienna, and which Peru currently chairs. The main objective of the Group of Friends of Spanish is the promotion and use in the United Nations of Spanish as the world's second most widely spoken language and the second most searched, both online and in the Organization's social networks.

We should acknowledge the Spanish-speaking peoples' growing interest in the work of the United Nations, which is creating a challenge for the Organization in that it must adapt to longer and more sustained searches, interactions and requests by the Spanish-speaking public around the world. In that regard, the Group of Friends of Spanish supports and promotes multilingualism as a core value of the Organization in all its work and its presence around the world. We believe that multilingualism, as a cross-cutting mandate, helps us to hold a genuine multilateral dialogue, especially with other linguistic groups, based on respect for and the promotion of multiculturalism and international harmony.

In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's report on multilingualism (A/71/757), which details the various activities of the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management as the Coordinator for Multilingualism. The Group of Friends of Spanish supports the proposed terms of reference for the Coordinator for Multilingualism outlined in annex II of the report, which we hope will contribute to the coordinated, consistent and coherent implementation of multilingualism in all bodies and at all levels of the United Nations system. We appreciate the important work that has been done to date by the Coordinator for Multilingualism and urge the heads of departments and offices to support those efforts, in particular by appointing focal points for the network of coordination agents and better reflecting their multilingual requirements in their strategic plans. We also welcome the initiative to develop a standards framework for facilitating the implementation of mandates on multilingualism throughout the United Nations system, as well as the initiative establishing a multilingualism week.

The Group of Friends of Spanish has reviewed the Secretary-General's report with great interest and has some comments on section III, on integrating

multilingualism in the Secretariat. We would like to emphasize that the mechanisms for recruiting and managing human resources in most departments and offices function essentially in two languages, English and French. For example, we would like the Office of Human Resources Management to also develop an information brochure on Inspira in Spanish. On the other hand, in addition to generating documentation in the six official languages, it is also important that existing documentation be updated regularly. To cite one example, the Procurement Manual is available only in three official languages and is updated only in English.

We welcome the launch of the UN iLibrary platform, currently available in English, French and Japanese, and we hope that versions in the other four official languages will be made available during this year.

We would also like to reiterate our request to the Department of Public Information with regard to press releases. We consider it essential that the Department be able to provide timely, accurate and exhaustive information on all public intergovernmental meetings in the six official languages.

We welcome the development of the website dedicated to language careers to ensure the hiring and training of language staff. In the same vein, we consider it essential to strengthen and expand the call for the annual Saint Jerome Translation Contest. The Group stresses the importance of having a professional body of translators, interpreters and revisers. We are confident that the Secretariat will continue to strive to select the best professionals and to guarantee the conditions allowing for the highest quality interpretation and translation through processes that conform to the highest international standards.

The Group of Friends of Spanish recognizes the important work being carried out by translators, interpreters and other language professionals in promoting multilingualism. In that regard, we welcome the imminent adoption of draft resolution A/71/L.68, entitled "The role of professional translation in connecting nations and fostering peace, understanding and development", which is scheduled for this morning.

While reiterating our full commitment to multilingualism and the activities of the Secretariat in that regard, the Group of Friends of Spanish is always at the Assembly's disposal.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now proceed to consider draft resolution A/71/L.68, entitled, "The role of professional translation in connecting nations and fostering peace, understanding and development".

I would like to inform the Assembly that at this stage the draft resolution has been closed for sponsorship via e-sponsorship.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. Pollard (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of draft resolution A/71/L.68, in addition to the delegations listed in that document, the following countries have also become sponsors of draft resolution A/71/L.68: Argentina, Bahrain, the Central African Republic, China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Namibia, Nicaragua, Peru, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): May I take that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.68?

Draft resolution A/71/L.68 was adopted (resolution 71/288).

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of agenda item 125.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the interpreters for their professional work.

Agenda item 126 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(j) Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie

Draft resolution (A/71/L.69)

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Madagascar to introduce draft resolution A/71/L.69.

Mr. Andrianarivelo-Razafy (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the States and the Governments members of the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF), I have the honour, under sub-item

(j) of item 126 of the agenda of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, to introduce draft resolution A/71/L.69, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie".

Two years after the adoption of the previous resolution bearing the same title, in April 2014 (resolution 69/270), the challenges facing our ever-changing world have continued to multiply and diversify. Those challenges affect many areas, including international peace and security, development, human rights, the fight against terrorism, and global warming, which leads to mass forced displacements of millions of persons and exacerbates the existing situations of vulnerability in several regions of the world.

Promoting peace and fighting poverty in all its forms and dimensions have therefore become a Promethean and, in some cases, a Sisyphian mission. It is no longer plausible or possible to deny that. Instead of constantly quibbling about this, we should eliminate this immediately. That must be translated into political terms, and the actions and measures of the international community must be strengthened in order to eliminate the devastating effects.

Those challenges are crucial and our responses must be in line with our ambitions, especially fiven the growing needs of our populations. La Francophonie and its 78 States members strive to implement and reinforce the commitments made and to increase our actions alongside the United Nations. The States members and the Governments members of La Francophonie are putting their awareness into play and, through this draft resolution, we are joining the United Nations efforts to work together in the political, economic, social, humanitarian, environmental, energy, cultural and linguistic domains, as well as in the field of human rights. In doing so, we will be able to respond appropriately to these global challenges.

This draft resolution comes at a crucial moment in the history of the United Nations. Indeed, it is taking place almost two years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and of the Addis Ababa Plan of Action on Financing for Development, and more than a year after the Paris Agreement. In its preambular part, the draft resolution reaffirms the political will of the international community, including States and Governments members of the OIF, to achieve, through the realization of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the 169 targets, sustainable development in all its three components, namely, economic, social and environmental.

As in the declaration and the resolutions adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the countries sharing French in Antananarivo on 26 and 27 November 2016 — the basic documents of our negotiations — several paragraphs recall the strong determination of the OIF member States and Governments to pursue and strengthen cooperation with the United Nations in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals. That cooperation must be close, strong and multifaceted if we hope for a better world.

The draft resolution also recalls the determination and efforts of La Francophonie in the areas of human rights and gender equality, as reflected in the decision of the Francophonie Summit held in Antananarivo, to create within the organization a permanent entity responsible for promoting gender equality in the areas of the empowerment of women and girls, entrepreneurship, education and training, and youth development. Multilingualism plays an important role in that regard as a fundamental value of the United Nations, in particular in the area of peacekeeping, where linguistic diversity constitutes a prerequisite for the effectiveness of field missions.

The draft resolution underlines the efforts of La Francophonie to promote water as an instrument of cooperation, clean and sustainable energy for all, as well as in the fight against terrorism and in the maintenance of peace.

In that context, it highlights the establishment, in October 2016, of the Boutros-Ghali Peacekeeping Observatory, which will in particular serve as a framework for exchanges between experts and francophone eminent persons from personnel-contributing countries. The Observatory will undoubtedly serve as a forum for the exchange and development of best practices and training tools for personnel to be deployed in French-speaking areas, in line with the performance objective of peacekeeping operations.

The draft resolution also encourages the strengthening of exchange and interaction between the United Nations and OIF, notably through the group of French-speaking Ambassadors in New York, over which I have the honour I presiding.

Finally, the draft resolution underlines the ongoing commitment of francophone countries to supporting major intergovernmental processes, including discussions and discussions on the future global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration and the preparations for the next oceans conference.

On behalf of the Malagasy Government and the States and Governments members of the OIF, I wish to express my deep gratitude to all the delegations and States Members of the United Nations that actively participated in the drafting of this resolution and whose spirit of solidarity and will, I hope, allow the draft resolution to be adopted by consensus.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/71/L.69, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie".

I would like to inform the Assembly that at this stage the draft resolution has been closed for sponsorship via e-sponsorship.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of draft resolution A/71/L.69, in addition to the delegations listed in that document, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Congo, the Czech Republic, Finland, Haiti, Latvia, Lebanon, the Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Slovenia, Sweden, Thailand, Ukraine and Viet Nam.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.69?

Draft resolution A/71/L.69 was adopted (resolution 71/289).

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): Before giving the floor to the speaker in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I now give the floor to the representative of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to thank the delegation of Madagascar for skillfully leading the negotiations on the resolution just adopted (resolution 71/289), entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie". Having actively participated in the negotiations and having joined the consensus on the resolution, my delegation would like share the following brief observations.

Azerbaijan is not a member of the International Organization of la Francophonie. However, my country enjoys partnership relations with almost all of its member States. We successfully cooperate with some of those member States in the framework of regional organizations. We pay special attention to making available more opportunities for learning the French language in Azerbaijan, including by developing existing educational infrastructure, along with creating new educational facilities. Therefore, in line with the initiative put forth by the Presidents of Azerbaijan and France, a French lyceum and French-Azerbaijani university were opened in Baku in 2014 and 2016, respectively. In addition, Azerbaijan holds an annual day of recognition for the French language and French culture. In April, we hosted a series of cultural events dedicated to the month of La Francophonie, and the Azerbaijani University of Languages was admitted to membership in the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie, which is a global network of over 850 universities in more than 100 countries. Moreover, a Francophonie centre was established in that same university.

The increasing role of organizations established on the basis of shared cultural and linguistic values of their member States, such as the International Organization of la Francophonie and the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, gives rise to the need for enhancing their cooperation with the United Nations across a broad agenda of mutual interests and concerns.

With regard to the resolution just adopted, we note the firm commitment of the States members of the International Organization of the Francophonie to international peace and security, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, linguistic and cultural diversity and the promotion of intercultural dialogue. In that context, strict compliance with the generally accepted norms and principles of international law, particularly those relating to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, acquire significant

importance. Therefore, it is critical that regional forums not be misused for the political advantage of those who persistently violate international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, advocate a culture of impunity and try to impose a distorted perception of a rules-based order. We believe that the continued engagement of the United Nations and regional organizations, including the International Organization of la Francophonie, together with strengthened cooperation between them, consistent with the Charter of the United Nations, international law and United Nations resolutions, will effectively contribute to peace, security and development in the respective regions and beyond.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

We will now hear statements following the adoption of resolution 71/289.

Mr. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia): I wish to extend my deep appreciation and gratitude to the delegation of Madagascar for having conducted the negotiations in a very effective and professional way. I also want to thank the membership of the United Nations for the consensual adoption of the very important resolution 71/289, on relations between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF), of which Armenia is a member. Armenia looks forward to working together with its OIF partners, both within the United Nations and in other settings.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/18, of 10 November 1978, and decision 53/453, of 18 December 1998, I now call on the observer for the International Organization of la Francophonie.

Ms. Herdt (International Organization of la Francophonie) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF), I would like to thank the members of the General Assembly for their consensus adoption of resolution 71/289, on cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie. I express that gratitude on behalf of Her Excellency Ms. Michaëlle Jean, Secretary-General of la Francophonie, and of the organization as a whole, which includes 84 member States and Governments spread across five continents, 79 of which are Members of the United Nations.

We welcome the particularly fruitful collaboration between our two Organizations and the joint actions that are carried out on a daily basis in the field. The resolution that has just been adopted reflects the values we share, our shared understanding that we face major challenges to overcome and the unfailing willingness of the OIF to address all major international issues. Faced with these high stakes and urgent matters, La Francophonie is positioning itself as a powerful source of proposals and for taking action. It contributes fully to fostering the vitality and diversity of multilateral organizations, to sustainable development, to international peace and security, to capacity-building and to the employability of young people.

I would like to express our gratitude to the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, His Excellency Mr. Peter Thomson, and to Secretary-General António Guterres for the importance they attach to cooperation between our two institutions.

We heartily thank the delegation of Madagascar, which served as facilitator for this resolution, for its ongoing readiness and outstanding commitment to welcoming the recent and numerous developments in cooperation between the United Nations and the OIF. These developments have been fuelled by the inroads made at the lates Summit of Heads of State and Government of La Francophonie, which was held in Antananarivo on 26 and 27 November 2016, which, in addition to the political endeavours of La Francophonie, underscored the strength of its cultural and economic diplomacy.

Finally, I would like to commend the work and solidarity of the group of French-speaking Ambassadors, which has contributed significantly to the promotion of the values and ideals of La Francophonie within the United Nations, as well as to the achievement of our common objectives.

Today's resolution is a reflection of the efforts made by the OIF and the United Nations for better coordinated actions that will lead to ever more concrete solutions and results for people. I therefore confirm that the International Organization of la Francophonie is fully ready to continue its efforts aimed at strengthening this cooperation.

The Acing President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker on this item.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (j) agenda item 126?

It was so decided.

Agenda items 19 and 73 (*continued*)

Sustainable development

Oceans and the law of the sea

(a) Oceans and the law of the sea

Draft decision (A/71/L.62)

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft decision A/71/L.62, entitled "Accreditation and participation of intergovernmental organizations in the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision A/71/L.62?

Draft decision A/71/L.62 was adopted (decision 71/552 B).

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 19 and sub-item (a) of agenda item 73.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.